1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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775 When I asked an Indian where it went, he responded, to the country of *Si-bu'*, and in reply to the question; where is that? he pointed unhesitatingly to the zenith. On inquiring where the road was, he told me it was invisible to the eyes of the living, but that the spirit (*wig'bru*) could see it.

In the other world there are no troubles, no cares. There is plenty to eat and to drink, of those things that the Indian loves most here. Plantains and corn are never wanting; meat and chicha are always to be had; and chocolate, the luxury, *par excellence* of the Costa Rican Indian never runs out, or becomes scarce as, alas too often, it does in Talamanca. He needs all his arms and implements, but it does not seem that he will be obliged to work. These little discrepancies, the wisest *Tsu-gur* does not attempt to explain. After death, the soul remains wandering about near the corpse until the burial feast. Then, by means of the songs of the *Tsu-gurs* or priests, it makes its journey to the "promised land."

789 Their superstitions are however, somewhat more definite and tangible since they affect their every day actions. There are two classes of uncleanness, *nya* and *bu-ku-ru'*. Anything that is essentially filthy, or that was connected with the death of a person is "*nya*," anything unclean in the Hebraic or Hindu sense is *bu-ku-ru'*. But *bu-ku-ru'* is even more powerful than it is supposed to be by the Orientals. It suffices not only to make one sick, but even kills. In a party where *bu-ku-ru'* is excited, it does not affect all alike, but only attacks the weakest. *Bu-ku-ru'* emanates in a variety of ways; arms, utensils, even houses become affected by it after long disuse and before they can be used again must be purified. In the case of portable objects left undisturbed for a long time, the custom is to beat them with a stick before touching them. I have seen a woman take a long walking stick and beat a basket hanging from the roof of a house by a cord. On asking what that was for, I was told that the basket contained her treasures, that she would probably want to take something out the next day and that she was driving off the *bu-ku-ru'*. A house long unused must be swept and then the person who is purifying it must take a stick and beat not only the movable objects, but the beds, posts, and in short, every accessible part of the interior. The next day it is fit for occupation. A place not visited for a long time or reached for the first time, is *bu-ku-ru'*. On our return from the ascent of Pico Blanco, nearly all the party suffered from little calenturas, the result of extraordinary exposure to wet and cold and of want of food. The Indians said that the peak was especially *bu-ku-ru'*, since nobody had ever been on it before. Even we foreigners were sick from it, and had any of them gone to the summit, they would have surely died. On one occasion, while buying some implements, I pulled down off a rack, two or three "blow guns" that, from the dust on them, must have lain there undisturbed for weeks, perhaps months. As I reached out my hand, I heard the warning cry of "*bu-ku-ru'*" from all around; laughingly disregarding it, and telling them that *bu-ku-ru'* couldn't hurt us, I began examining them.

[753]

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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776 and yet their priests give him twenty names, in their songs. These names, so far as I could ascertain, all refer to his qualities. One Bri-bri, whom I had with me as a servant for over half a year, and from whom I obtained much valuable information, particularly in regard to the language, said to me, "Why do you foreigners ask us how many Gods there are? There is only one, and that is *Si-bu'*."

The Devil, or devils, are minor personages, who receive no worship of any kind. They are called, *Bi*, by the Bri-bris and Cabecars, *Au* in Tiribi, *Auk* in Terraba, and *Ku-gro'* in Boruca. The devil is generally malevolent, but does not seem to be specially feared. *Bi* among the Bribris is a term also used for a variety of lesser devils, or evil spirits who have special missions, like making people sick, &c. Some of these inhabit the less frequented parts of the forests and mountains, and are very jealous of their domains. People entering an unfrequented region, make as little noise as possible. If they make the local *Bi* angry with their noise, he will revenge himself by a shower or by causing somebody to fall and hurt himself, or to be bitten by a snake, &c. A person who has once been in these places can return with less risk, but all new-comers must keep at least a comparative silence. Another class of beings inhabit the rocks on the summits of certain mountain peaks. They live *inside* the rocks, not among them, consequently their habitations are undistinguishable to mortal eyes. They seem to have the same habits as ordinary humans. One of these peaks, a mile or two across a cañon, in front of a place called Sar-we, is thus inhabited according to the accounts of the people of Sar-we. They told me of hearing singing, the beating of drums, &c., coming from that direction. The configuration of the hills is such that a glance showed me, that a drum beaten at certain of the houses in the cañon of Uren, would echo back from this hill to Sar-we and thus account for the sounds. These people of the *U-jums*, as the naked peaks are called, are said to be the owners of the tapirs which roam through these solitudes. They are very jealous of their domains and cause, by some occult means, the death of any one who dares approach their homes. I could not induce an Indian to accompany us to the summit of Pico Blanco, partly on account of *bu-ku-ru'*, and perhaps more still for fear of the people of the *U-jum* or peak. In addition to these beliefs, they also believe in the efficacy of incantation by their *Awas* or doctors, of whom more immediately; and further in certain ceremonies or observances of their own. I have seen a woman carefully collect a bunch of some weed and taking it to the river wash her face, neck, breast, and arms with it. This was to bring good luck to the men who were at the time at work turning a stream to dry its bed, for the purpose of catching fish. She had her reward; hundreds of fish of 3 to 4 pounds weight were captured, and of a quality as fine as shad.

There is a peculiar wood, of which I shall have occasion to speak further on, used only for walking sticks for the chiefs and more eminent persons. The growing tree is unknown and it is only obtained by the

353 gun pellets; the necessary equipment for fishing and hunting; hen nets or nests for laying
[291] made of vine; bark containers or *bavas;* reme-
[415] dies in gourds, net bags, wrapped in *bijagua* leaves, or, rarely, in bottles; tobacco leaves; bright feathers from birds, in particular the oriole and macaw; toucan bills; dried flowers;
[237] sea shells and the shells of crustaceans; animal skins for dress or for curing purposes; fibers for making rope or string; and seeds and tubers for planting.

352 *Cabuya* string (*see* Fibers) hammocks, made
513 by the Bribri men and used by them and the Cabécares, are also suspended from the roofs of all houses and are for sleeping as well as resting. Instead of hammocks, sometimes leaves are placed on the ground by the fire and are used for sleeping. This is inconvenient as dogs and pigs are apt to disturb people sleeping on the floor.

352 Low tetrapod wooden stools or benches are common. These may be long, rectangular, or
[531] circular and are often decorated with a protruding head and tail. The women sit on them while cooking, or people while talking, in order not to be bothered by smoke. The
[824] benches are generally made of cedar by the men and are called *kaLwa* or *bekkegLɔ* in Cabécar and *kuLá* [77] in Bribri.

415 Close to the roof or the low wall, wooden mixing trays or wooden mortars, *bavas,* and basketlike containers (*dɛku* in Cabécar), fre-
[824] quently lined with *bijagua* leaves to hold chicha paste, are raised on wooden supports to protect them from animals. Large, earthen chicha jars with a pointed base are found in all the big circular houses of the Bribri and in some Cabécar ones (fig. 4, *c*). There is always
[439] one or more iron pots, bought in Limón or a Company commissary (fig. 6, *d*). This is true even in upper Talamanca. Here and in the
[824] remote parts of Chirripó, *bijagua* leaves fre-
[264] quently serve as plates and cups, and instead of spoons, knives and forks, the fingers are used for eating from these or from a common
[753] pot or gourd. People say that eating utensils are "dirty" and fear sickness as a result of their use.

352 In the smaller houses, the general furnishings
177 are the same. As these dwellings are usually

[192] to the Bribri term *kuLá.* In this section, the two groups are in close contact.

[P. 26(A)]

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Bribri
Cabecar

Past	Present	Future
5 days past *skfLi*		5 days after today *skfiki*
6 days past *térik*		6 days after today *teriki*

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 26(B)--Analyst]

LIFE CYCLE

All events of life are bound by tabus and fear, and of necessity these occasions require the aid of the medicine man. Even on the Pacific slope where custom is less rigid, certain prohibitions and laws continue, although they are not freely discussed nor is their practise admitted to strangers.

Pre-natal. Both Gabb [98] and Pittier [99] have called attention to the fact that the Bribri believe that an unborn child can be influenced by certain objects seen or objects worn by the woman around her waist. This is not limited to the Bribri, however, but is also characteristic of the Cabécar. In addition to the information given by the above-mentioned authors, there are many more superstitions, some of which are cited below. Pregnant women cannot participate when certain types of poison are used for fishing (*see* Fishing), nor can they cut cacao trees. If they cut such a tree, when it is time for the child to die, he will wilt from the waist down in slow agony and will then require the aid of a medicine man to die (*see* Curing). A pregnant woman cannot eat from a pot, only from a leaf or a plate. If she fails to obey this rule, her child will be stupid or stricken dumb and not even the medicine man can cure him. If she eats *perico ligero* (sloth) it means that her family will be valiant and hard to kill. If the man is an *okym* (*see* Death), he cannot bury while his wife is pregnant. There is also the belief that the first time a girl is in this state someone has to die. Occasionally, therefore, the family of a dead person search for a girl in her first pregnancy and a fight with her family ensues. This does not happen on the Pacific side.

Tapir meat is tabu. Some months before birth, the medicine man gives the expectant

[TEXT CONTINUES MIDDLE OF P. 26(B)--Analyst]

[98] Gabb, 1875, p. 494.

6;Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962

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Bribri
Cabecar

Cabécares, its origin dates from before the birth of the world. At that time, *sibu* owned a staff which in a certain sense was his monitor. It is interesting to note that wooden staffs which are obviously ceremonial have been found in caches associated with the Highland archæology on the slopes of Irazú volcano (fig. 12, *a*).[144] They are a South American trait and are still used by medicine men among the Chocó of Colombia and by tribes in the Amazon basin. In Talamanca itself, chief and medicine man staffs were carved as late as the 19th century (fig. 12, *b*).[145] In Spanish, the medicine man's staff used today (fig. 11, *c*) is known as the *palo de cacique*, its red wood popularly believed to be *cacique* wood. There is a mystical connection between the medicine man and his staff which is supposed to carry his curing power as well as contact benevolent spirits who help him cure. In Bribri it is called *bĩ̀ɔbLəkɔrkeLi*. This literally translated means: *bĩ̀ɔbLɔ*, a term applied to the songs of the medicine man in the night; *kɔr* = for; *keLi* = staff. Only the medicine men know where to find this firm wood.[146]

There is still another wooden object used for curing when the patient is in the last stages of an illness and nothing else will work. This is a balsa log on which the medicine man carves with a knife, or makes rude drawings of, certain spirits called *sukú* or *sukúsekè* (*see* Theological Beliefs): a crocodile, snakes, a monkey, a bird, and a skeleton in chains. The subjects seem to depend upon the sickness. Some are the medicine man's spirit helpers while some are malignant spirits who are thought to have caused the disease. This log is placed beside the ill person whose hand is held by the curer or the patient has to sit on it. A chant forms part of this ceremony.

Stones are another very special part of the equipment, the origin of which is also bound up in religious theology (*see* Sacred Songs). A medicine man may have any number of stones but there are two principal ones with a covering name which is sometimes mistaken by laymen as a third stone. This collective

[144] It resembles the one described by Gabb, 1875, p. 520.
[145] Staffs vary in length from three to six feet.

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
[P.46(B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri
Cabecar

758 house. The *pejibaye* has the advantage of thorns to keep innocent children from straying into trouble, as no one except the medicine man is allowed to touch the ill. Water is kept within reach of the sick person by suspending it in a gourd from a long stick.

826 753 Lehmann[147] pointed out that the liver was considered the key to all emotions, sickness, and health. This is still true. The Cabécar phrase for happy or the state of good health signifies that the liver is in good condition. [774] Lehmann further adds that the activities of the soul are connected with this organ.[148] On the whole, many fevers are supposed to be caused by the liver. Among the Bribri, however, influenza is credited to *bák-namá* (*see* Myths).

164 The principal complaints noted among these peoples are caused by intestinal parasites with subsequent anemia; conjunctivitis, especially among the Bribri; *papalomollo* or Leishmaniosis; and malaria, particularly in Talamanca. Measles, mumps, and at times smallpox and yellow fever also take a heavy toll when they occur in epidemic form.

839 Among the Cabécares, there are numerous cases of male perversion. No social stigma is attached nor is any cure attempted.

278 Curing. Herbs, vines, quinine bark, and other medicines prepared from flowers and berries are used.

752 824 A medicine for snake bites is made from *Dracontium Pittieri* Engl. and also from *Aristolochia sylvicola* Standley, which is mashed and cooked. This is combined with the bark of a tree called *bek* in Cabécar and

757 is used to cause sterilization. Diets, as has been noted, form a part of many cures although they are also observed at times of death by the *usegLa* clan. The principal ceremonial and

155 533 magical elements included in curing are songs (prayers), always sung with the staff and the stones. One of the prayers the medicine men of Cabécar and some of the Bribri sing to

[787] combat sickness and to foretell if the patient will live or die is given under the heading of *Sacred Songs*. To rid one of the *wimbLu*, the medicine man sings for three nights and asks *sibu* (*see* Theological Beliefs) not to allow the spirit to scare any more.

[147] Lehmann, 1920, vol. 1, p. 282.
[148] Lehmann, 1920, vol. 1, p. 282.

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
[P.47(B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Cabécar
Bribri
Terraba

tion are still evident in many tabus pertaining to animals. Among the Cabécares, all animals have a plant name which is used when a hunt is planned. One does not say that he is going to hunt a given creature. He announces that he is going to look for yuca or *tiquízque*, as the case might be. This is to deceive the protector or *dueño* of the animal so that the game will not be warned. Each sickness is associated with a distinct animal and is believed to be sent by *ditegLa*, lord of illness. The toad is associated with a sickness that causes pain in the stomach, loss of weight, coughing, and then death. The first women in the world had this illness. A medicine man passed the toad over them as a cure. It is bad to touch a toad. The *duriwak* clan of the Bribri cannot touch toads nor possums. In fact, the Buriers (*see* Death) are the only persons who can touch buzzards or possums. They are allowed to kill the latter. The *kor'wak* clan of the now extinct *korrebué* or Singers could not eat nor touch tapir because it was the reincarnation of their ancestors. The *sɜ́ɲtrwa* and *múnúLiwa* not only cannot eat this today, but the *múnúLiwa* must even change their direction if they see tapir tracks. Bribri women and children can only eat this meat if it has first been smoked and then cooked by an old woman. Macaw meat is tabu to women and to men belonging to the Bribri clans of *duriwak*, *saLɜwak*, *kor'wak*, *kúmbuwak*, *sulariwak*, *and ruLgikwak*. Before other men can consume it, macaw has to be prepared in a special pot and the partakers have to wash their hands.

FOLKLORE

The War between the Cabécares and Terribís

(*Cabécar*)

sibu left *sibuLetá*, the green mountain, in Cabécar. It was the time when people wore only loincloths of *mastate*. Many Terribís (Térrabas) suddenly appeared to kill the

remembered that these people were under the dominance of the Bribri, and according to Cabécar tradition definitely took part and suffered in these raids as the version cited denotes.

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
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[P. 51(1)] Cabecar Bribri

538 773 The "histories" or legends of the Cabécares and Bribri are numerous. By reviewing them we can gather some of their fundamental theology in spite of the influence of Christian missionaries and contacts with non-indigenous cultures. The Indians themselves refer to these stories as histories and do not like the word tale or legend. To them, they are still something sacred and apart and on the whole are known only to the *jawá* or older men. They are recounted to aspirants, and occasionally around the fire during nights of interminable winter rain. It is interesting that histories dealing with subjects such as the soul, the creation of the world, etc., are usually Cabécar by origin although accepted by the Bribri. Secular tales recounting the reason for the appearance or the voice of certain animals are generally Bribri.

776 **Theological Beliefs.** At the root of Talamanca religion, there is one powerful god, *sibu*, who, as Lehmann notes, has at least twenty different names.[100] He is good and is responsible for the good in the world. He is everywhere. When he is with non-Indians he dresses with shoes, etc., but with Indians he does as they do. He speaks all languages and taught people how to do everything.

[773] The role of *sibu* is akin to that of an artist or architect. He thought of man and he made us through *suLá* while he, *sibu*, was thinking 775 of them. The good and bad people all go to *sibu* when they die if their bones have been sung to (*see* Bone Burial). The soul must wait for this, and if they are never sung to, then a snake eats the bones. The souls of Indians and non-Christians go to the world below, nevertheless. This is why *sibu* took everything 772 from beneath the earth to make place for the 776 Indians there. In this underground domain, there are four worlds. One is for sickness; one 753 for the owners (*dueño*) or protectors of animals; one for Indians; one for the evil spirits. Disease is often sent by the spirit owners or protectors of animals or the animals themselves. This is one reason why the medicine [752] man has his own and secret name for them.

771 776 The Talamanca religion on the whole, how-

[100] Lehmann, 1920, vol. 1, p. 220.

776 stole his child while Thunder was away in the forest. The bereaved father was furious and called *miguchké*, making a tremendous noise. Thunder fought and killed *miguchké*.

Minor evildoers are the *tǫmí* who are both men and women and can be treated collectively or individually. The *tǫmí* inhabit a mountain called *tabatá* near Cabagra on the Pacific side. At times, one can see their clothes drying in the distance, but upon reaching the spot, there are only four large upright stones. The *tǫmí* [825] take care of all animals. The tapir are their cows and the wild pigs and boars their swine. Reports about them come from hunters who have lost their way tracing game. The *tǫmí* do not like men.

Another bad spirit is *orusula*, an enormous pig whose head *sibu* cut off and kept his blood to teach men to beware of him. He lives in the mud of swamps and lagoons and his foam gives [753] people a rash which kills them.

775 There are some important malevolent spirits common to both groups known as the *wimbLu* [774] who are souls of the dead. There is more than one soul per person. One goes to *suLa;* one stays with the bones; and another appears to be the soul that torments the living. If the deceased liked to sing or whistle, his spirit has to do the same and it returns to make itself known to the person who cared most for him in life. It appears on the trail, in the cemetery, [787] makes a noise, and pesters its victim in dreams. [756] A medicine man is needed to rid one of the *wimbLu* (*see* Curing). If he doesn't do this, [753] the person dies.

776 There are also spirit lords of places and fish. None of these are particularly friendly to man.

nikubru lives on Pico Blanco where no one can reach him. His one good deed is to warn when sickness is coming by producing great flames on the summit.

The *ujum* are people who live in the rocks on barren peaks. The Bribri consider them as part of the original population of the earth before man and believe that they are evildoers.

suLášibí today is the name given to a section of land on the Alta Lari near Lagarto or *toLók*. The Bribri believe that before the birth of the sun, *suLášibí* was a person. He was lord of the

[192]

[191] *di* is "water" and *bak* is "stone" in both languages. Jaguar is *kú* in Bribri and *namú* in Cabécar.
[190] *See* Linguistic Texts: *sibu* (sibu) *tsikineL* (born).

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gra and *karpimina*. The medicine man has to talk to them and to *serike* when he wants to make rain or to stop the rain. September is planting time in Talamanca, and that is when the sun is needed so as the cuttings or seeds will not be washed away. It is then that the *jawá* chants:

Let the sun come clear.
Let him rain above the sea.
Send to the north, the south, the east, the west,
Put on his clothes.
Come!
When he puts on good clothes,
The sun looks good;
But when he has on dirty ones
He's not so nice.

To bring rain, the *jawá* chants:

karpíbibgra, karpímina
Come here,
Come rain storm,
To fall here.

(4) The Rainbow [174]

(Bribri and Cabécar)

When *bukubLaxe*, the bad spirit (*see* Taboo), smokes his pipe, he lights it with the rainbow. The smoke that comes forth is the north wind.

(5) The Origin of the Cabécares [175]

(Cabécar)

sibu kept us in the form of seeds in a *jabu* (basket; *see* Manufactures). The chief of the worms, a greedy fellow, passed and saw us there. He swallowed us. For this reason we have worms.

When *sibu* realized what had happened, he began to think about the kind of medicine to give this creature so that he would vomit up the *jabu* with the seeds. He decided on a mixture of drink knowing that the fellow was so greedy he would not refuse.

There was a little cacao tree and a gourd tree (*Crescentia Cujete* L.) which never bore. *sibu* met the chief of the worms near these.

[174] *See* Linguistic Terms: *sejé ziukbiwL* = we are born. For version of the Bribri origin myth *see* Pittier, 1908, pp. 2-4; Stone, 1954, p. 193. This last includes another Cabécar account.

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
[P.63(B)]
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Cabecar

Sickness

(*Cabécar*)

* 539
● 753
[776] *Laraya* is the house of sickness and it is located under the spot where the sun rises. The lords or owners of sickness are known as the *aragopa* or *roaragopa*. They were the first people in the world, but *sibu* told them they would have to go below where the sun comes from as the people he would make would be sick if they stayed.

[756] This is why the medicine men take a staff
[755] and say to sickness, "You have no right to be here as *sibu* gave you a place to stay. Go to your place." If the medicine man talks enough, sickness leaves as he realizes that *sibu* can send him away and he does not like this.

Clan Protectors

(*Cabécar*)

*539
614 All protectors of clans come from where the sun rises. Formerly, each group and person in it had a figure of bone or stone or gold symbolizing this. The *usegLa* are protected by the
[825] jaguar and the crab. It was the crab who found water for them. He went to a dry place and dug halfway down. Water came up behind him.

The *tigibi* clan are a branch of the *usegLa* and have the same protectors. This group started when there were only men in the world. One day two men went to work and on their return found food prepared. They ate and liked it. This continued for thirty days. Then when they arrived home, they discovered twin girls. The men asked if they had fixed the food, and when the twins admitted that they were the ones, the men decided to live with them.

[776] The *sirakwa* are people who live under the earth. They protect the *túgwa*. For this reason, the *túgwa's* symbol is the figure of a person.

[824] The *guacal* or gourd tree has four branches and protects four groups. The first branch is symbolic of the *sibewak* clan to whom most of the Cabécar Singers belonged. This is why they used a gourd full of seeds to accompany their songs. The second branch of the tree belongs to the *bLeriwa*, the third to the *kibe-*